

Chicken Under a Brick



Plan Z Phase: This is a Z3 (ZReboot) recipe. One of my favorite French bistro dishes is chicken under a brick. I decided I had to figure out how to make it myself. Most places make it in a wood burning oven. I don't have one so I had to make adjustments. It worked. I hope you like it and enjoy it.

Servings: Serves 2 – but can be easily multiplied

Ingredients:

- 2 organic chicken breast halves with bone in, skin on. Traditional chicken under a brick recipes would call for half chickens; including dark meat but for this recipe I used white meat.
- olive oil spray
- 1/2 tsp of chopped herbs. I just use the Italian blend from a jar. If you want to make it really special, you could use Herbs de Provence.
- 2 Tbl of olive oil
- salt (preferably sea salt)

Instructions:

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees.

Advance prep: this dish calls for some equipment from the garden. You actually do need a brick or flat rock that you have cleaned, dried and covered thoroughly in aluminum foil. The weight on top of the chicken, while it's cooking, is what makes the fabulous, crispy crust. For the pan, I use cast iron. You need something sturdy and non-stick that can handle 400-degree heat in your oven. One option instead of a brick is to use another, smaller cast iron pan and rest it on top of the chicken instead of the brick. Most folks who have one cast iron pan have a set of them so this is definitely an option.

You'll need an oven-proof pan. I use my medium cast iron pan for this dish. You need a pan that can go from stovetop to oven and this one is perfect. Don't try to use a non-stick pan. It won't work.

Wash and thoroughly dry your chicken pieces. Spray the skin side with olive oil spray and then dust with your Italian herbs/spices or chopped herbs. Now grate a generous amount of sea salt over the skin side of the chicken. The secret to this dish is the crusty topping the chicken will have and French Bistro cooking is not afraid of salt on special occasions. You choose when to stop grating the salt. You know your taste.

Heat the 2 Tbl of olive oil in your pan on medium high. When it's hot but not burning add the chicken, skin-side down. It will immediately start to spit and bubble. Cover with your brick or another cast iron pan. You need weight on the chicken. Turn the heat down to medium-low. Cook on medium-low for 12 – 15 minutes. During this time the fat in the chicken skin will break down and help form your crust. It will give you a texture sort of like crispy-fried bacon. The fat on the oil with the pressure is where the magic occurs.

After the time has passed carefully remove your weight and turn

your chicken over. Set the weight aside, safely, and transfer your chicken to the oven. Bake at 375 for another 12 – 15 minutes. Check the chicken to make sure it's done by putting a small slice into the thickest part. The juices should be clear; not pink. The time needed will depend on how large your chicken breast pieces are. I use large ones for this simple dish.

I serve this with zucchini cut into chunks and sauteed in a drizzle of Italian salad dressing and olive oil. You could also serve this with a salad. The chicken will be crispy and juicy. Serve immediately. If you wait you'll start to lose the crispy.

Enjoy!

Cheers,